the labor organizations, the Communists were making frantic efforts to undermine the Weimar Republic. In the 1920's, Germany was the target of Moscow's global strategy. The Weimar Republic was the keystone of the political system established by the Versailles Treaty. To destroy it would open up new revolutionary possibilities in Europe, and Moscow believed that the German Republic could be destroyed by crushing the S-D party.

The Kremlin gained its first success in the elections to the Reichstag in May, 1924, when the Communists got 3.7 million votes and 62 seats as compared with 6.3 million votes and 100 seats for the S-D. The Communists' success was due largely to their promise to free Germany from reparations and wipe out the Versailles Treaty—the formula that brought Hitler to power a few years later. The Dawes Plan of August, 1924, relieved much of the pressure of reparations, and nationalist passions seemed to subside. At the new elections in December, 1924, the Communists lost a million votes and seventeen seats. The extreme nationalists likewise suffered a setback. But the Communist threat remained. The danger was in the silent alliance between the extreme left and the extreme right. The Military High Command and the leaders of German heavy industry contemplated building munitions and aircraft factories on the Volga for the future rearmament of Germany. There was a nationalist undertone in the sympathy of German intellectuals for the Soviets. They brushed aside the danger of a Communist coup in Germany: "It can't happen here. Germany is not Russia."

The combined forces of the rightists and the Communists clashed openly with the forces of the Republic after the death of Ebert, when Germany had to elect a new President. In the first contest in March, 1925, the right bloc won 10.4 million votes; the S-D candidate, 7.8 million; the Catholic Center, 3.9 million; and the Communists came fourth, with 1.9 million. In the absence of an absolute majority, a second election was held. The rightist forces backed General von Hindenburg. Only a united front of the republican elements could have blocked his election. The S-D decided to join forces with the Center. The Communists stuck to their candidate, Thaelmann, the "transport worker," and directed all their vituperation against the S-D. Hindenburg was elected by a plurality, 14.7 million votes to 13.8 million for Marx, the republican candidate, with 1.9 million for Thaelmann. This was the turning point in German history, the beginning of the end of the Weimar Republic.

The socialistic unions, with six million members, were the stronghold of democracy in the nation. I had more faith in them than in either the S-D party or the Center and reproached them only for their lack of initiative, their hesitancy in facing difficult problems, and